MOTHER ELIZABETH SETON

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A MEMOIR OF
MOTHER ELIZABETH SETON

FOUNDRESS OF
THE SISTERS OF CHARITY IN
AMERICA

WITH SOME OF
HER SPIRTUAL MAXIMS
AND A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF HER
DAUGHTERS IN
HALIFAX

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Dedicated to

Saint John Berchmans

Patron of

Our Reverend and Devoted

Mother-General

Mother Mary Berchmans

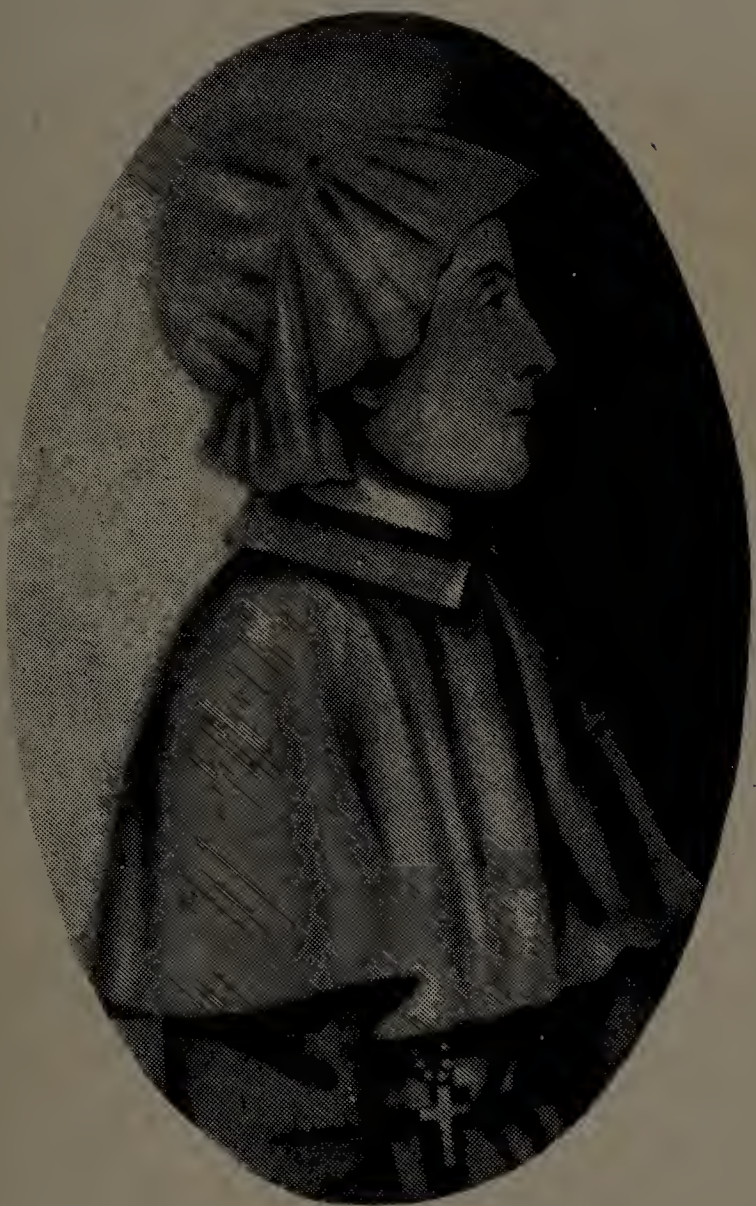
TO MOTHER SETON

O Holy Foundress look to-day
From the blessed realms above,
Wide-spread thy children sound thy praise
And claim with joy thy Mother's love.
Thy influence grows with passing years,
Thy memory sweet like perfume rare
Clings round the homes thy daughters rear
And sheds its fragrance everywhere.

O Valiant Mother, undismayed
In every trial fraught with pain,
Thou sang'st a Deo Gratias
And deemed the suff'ring but thy gain.
Cross-laden we need thy courage strong,
And our lips tremble as they sing,
Let the faint echo of thy song
Spur us to follow Christ our King.

O Saintly Mother, oft in prayer
Thy spirit soared aloft to God,
To gaze upon His sanctity
Because the lowly ways thou'dst trod.
As lark unseen above the clouds
Fills earth with rapturous jubilee,
So would'st thou chant thy Maker's praise,
Such faith we ask His Face to see.

O Loving Mother, swells the song
Of faithful voices young and old,
The little children led to God
Safe shepherded within its fold.
The sick, the poor, the fatherless,
Each one, thy Charity avows.
But sweetest sounds the Virgins' hymn
Whom thou hast given to Christ, their Spouse.



MOTHER ELIZABETH SETON

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF
MOTHER ELIZABETH SETON

IN New York City, on the Feast of St. Augustine, August 28, 1774, Elizabeth Seton was born. In honor of the great doctor, the Church was singing:—

"De profundis tenebrarum
Lumen mundi exit clarum,
Et scintillat hodie.
Olim quidem vas erroris
Augustinus, vas honoris
Datus est Ecclesiae."

"Lo, from out the depths of darkness
Bursts a flame the world pervading,
Shines Augustine's glorious light.
He of error once the vessel,
Now unto the Church is given
As a vessel fraught with honor."

Surely each year, when that date recurs, we may joyfully apply these words to our beloved Mother. She came forth from the shadows of Anglicanism but became such a light to the Church in America that thousands of her spiritual children are walking even to-day in its brightness.

The little Elizabeth, in her third year, was deprived by death of a mother's love, but her father, Doctor Richard Bayley, bestowed upon

his wee daughter a wealth of affection which was almost maternal. Later, by a second marriage, he gave to her and to her two sisters a step-mother whose tender piety doubtless did much to turn the mind of the vivacious child to God.

The union between the father and daughter was ideal. Sweet pictures of their intercourse easily arise before our fancy. We imagine that we see small "Betty" once more slipping out to the street from her place in the school-room for a stolen but rapturous embrace in Doctor Bayley's arms, and then noiselessly recovering her seat before the gentle dame, the preceptress, had noticed her absence. Into what dancing black eyes must the doctor have looked when he caught the small student to his heart and how strenuously must she have tried to veil their triumphant glances in order to avoid detection on her return!

Had her education been dependent on such schools as New York afforded at the time, Elizabeth would not have made much progress. Fortunately, we can picture the young girl poring over the books of her father's extensive library. He had been educated in England and was a gentleman of wide culture. Under his direction she read diligently on a variety of subjects and the copious notes and reflec-

tions she has left show with what intellectual delight her tasks were pursued. She acquired an accurate knowledge of French, which was to do much service for her Community in future years. Religious and historical works in both English and French appealed to her and helped to develop that large view of life and that sympathetic understanding of the ways of others which made her even in girlhood, unconsciously, a director of souls.

Most of us are familiar with the portrait taken in New York, which depicts Elizabeth as a young woman of twenty-two. Even a passing glance reveals remarkable beauty and refinement and can hardly fail to impress us with its union of animation and repose, of strength and sweetness. We understand why Doctor Bayley was more tenderly attached to this gifted and lovable daughter than to any of his other children.

But when the portrait was taken, already she was a wife and mother. Elizabeth Bayley had become Mrs. William Seton and the infant lips of her first child, Anna Maria, were already lisping her name. How little did Elizabeth, bending over the cradle of her first-born, dream of the host of spiritual children, whose joy it would be in after years to call the babe their sister!

In the person of William McGee Seton, Elizabeth found a devoted husband. He was, like herself, a member of the Episcopal Church and came of a family distinguished for virtue and talent. At the time of their marriage his prospects promised a large share in the good things of this world; but, after a few years of prosperity, those mercantile difficulties which followed the French Revolution made a great change. One disaster followed another until business worries threatened Mr. Seton's health, both in body and mind.

His unworldly wife, however, was not dismayed. Meditation on the Sacred Scriptures, constantly practiced from childhood, had filled her with a tender confidence in God's paternal Providence. The things of eternity weighed far more with her than merely temporal affairs. Nevertheless, she neglected nothing in her power to assist her husband. Many night watches were kept, in arranging his papers, and daily she endeavored to cheer him.

Doubtless it was owing in great measure to her own sweet spirit that she could say, in speaking of Mr. Seton, "Never did a mortal bear misfortune and all the aggravated distress of it with so much firmness and patience as he does."

Meanwhile a heavier sorrow than the loss

of money fell upon Elizabeth in the fatal illness of her father. He was stricken in the August of 1801, by the dreaded yellow fever, which he contracted while in devoted attendance on the immigrants detained in quarantine at the port of New York. The devout soul of his daughter was in anguish. Though Doctor Bayley's life had been filled with deeds of benevolence and she had seen him daily practising the natural virtues, yet the Christian faith in which he had been brought up, seemed to have left him. The writings of men like Rousseau had apparently eradicated any other religious sentiment than a human prompting of kindness towards the poor and suffering to whose Divine Saviour Elizabeth did not remember ever to have heard him refer. Consequently, she trembled for the salvation of his immortal soul.

During those anxious days she spent most of her time at his bedside, glad to see in his eyes the pleasure which his dear Bet's presence gave him, and sometimes finding his hand put out to touch her, when he was unable to speak. Incessantly she prayed that his soul, too, might grope even in the darkness of delirium for the Almighty hand waiting to save. For this intention she offered even the life of her infant daughter, Catherine. But God

was doubly merciful. The child was spared, and to Elizabeth's inexpressible comfort, the dying man began, with evident faith and love, to repeat the Holy Name. On August 17, 1801, his soul went forth in peace.

Great as was Elizabeth Seton's sorrow at the death of her beloved father, her soul waxed strong in the grace, which, if we may judge by the notes she penned at this time, poured down in abundance. God was preparing for her a greater trial. In her He found a cheerful giver. There is a passage from a prayer she wrote that summer which is extraordinary, when we consider her position, and which would put even deeply religious souls to the blush. "Welcome disappointment and poverty," it runs, "welcome sickness and pain, welcome even shame and contempt and calumny. If this be a rough and thorny path, it is one which Thou hast gone before us. Where we see Thy footsteps we cannot repine."

By the fall of 1803, Mr. Seton's health had so far failed that the doctors prescribed a sea voyage as a last resource. His wife, willing to undergo any danger in the hope of prolonging his life, committed her four other children to the care of her sister-in-law, Rebecca Seton, and, with eight-year old Annina, prepared to accompany the invalid to sunny Italy. There

they intended to visit old friends, the Filicchi family, with whom Mr. Seton had had mercantile connections in his youth.

Alas for the sunshine! When their vessel reached Leghorn, they found that the news of yellow fever in New York had preceded them. Forty days of quarantine were required and the Setons, sole passengers, were rowed away in a boat to the Lazaretto, a building so near the edge of the sea that the surf often dashed upon the windows. The Italian officials, indeed, meant no unkindness but the quarantine station was cold and damp, a bad place for a man in the last stages of consumption,—a prison house which it seemed he must exchange only for the grave.

However, they tried to find a bright side to the situation. Little Annina skipped rope to keep warm and cheered her parents by her quaint speeches. The Filicchis came to speak to their friends through a grating and sent a servant, a dear old man named Louis, to wait on them and share their quarantine. Even the Capitano of the Lazaretto did all in his power to show his sympathy, while his daughter made Annina a rag baby to play with. At last the authorities, doubtless through the Filicchis, shortened the quarantine by ten days. Even so, it was a hard and

wearisome month for poor Mrs. Seton, striving to alleviate her husband's distress, while she saw him daily yielding more and more to the ravages of his disease.

As at the bedside of her dying father, so now again, that burning zeal for the souls of her dear ones shone forth. The Holy Scriptures were her stay. She read favorite consoling passages to the sick man, talked of the next world in her brightest manner and sang hymns to make him forget his pain, until he confided to her that, should he recover, he would consider the days spent in the Lazaretto as the only period of his life not lost.

On the 19th of December they were free and Antonio Filicchi's carriage bore them away at once to lodgings in Pisa on the banks of the Arno. Mr. Seton at first rallied but it was only for a short time. Two days after Christmas, while calling with the tenderest confidence upon the name of Jesus, he died. With heroic fortitude his widow knelt with Annina beside the body to thank God for his soul's release from the long agony and then she herself prepared the remains for burial. Fear of tuberculosis kept the people of the house at a distance, but they could not conceal their admiration as they saw Mrs. Seton

performing the last sad offices for the dead. "If she were not a heretic, she would be a saint!" was their wondering exclamation. Her half-brother, Guy Carleton-Bayley, who held a position as clerk in the counting house of Filicchi, was a consolation to her in these sorrowful hours, but most of all she looked to the members of the Filicchi family for comfort and support. They brought Elizabeth and her child to their beautiful home in Leghorn and did all in their power to sweeten the bitterness of loss.

Italy was indeed to bring sunshine to Mrs. Seton's life. Those earthly rays which she had hoped would win health for her husband, had, indeed, at the critical hour, been denied her, but now the light of faith broke upon her soul, becoming brighter each day of her sojourn with the ardently catholic Filicchis.

After a trip to Florence which those kind friends planned in order to divert her mind from its sad thoughts, it was intended that she should return to America in a few weeks' time but Providence ordained otherwise. They did, indeed, set sail but during the first night their ship was struck by another vessel and had to put back for repairs. Before these were completed little Anna fell ill of scarlet fever and though the child soon recovered,

her mother caught the disease and was confined to bed for some weeks. Thus, by what seemed a series of accidents, Elizabeth was kept in Italy to experience personally the effects of that charity and piety which burned in the hearts of the Filicchis.

The family had a private chapel in their house so that their guest knelt often in the Eucharistic Presence. A longing to believe in Jesus dwelling in the midst of us, took possession of her heart. Once when she heard the tinkle of a bell rung beneath her window as the Blessed Sacrament was carried through the streets to the sick, she fell upon her knees and with tears besought Him, if He were really there, to bless her. That prayer was heard. With the help especially of Antonio Filicchi, whose knowledge of his religion seems almost to have equalled that of a cleric, she studied the doctrines of the Catholic Church and recognized at last the Apostolic body founded by Christ. The intelligence of Elizabeth was soon convinced, and her resolution was taken to enter into the one, true fold to which in spirit, at least, we must believe she had ever belonged.

Before she was ready for Baptism, the sailing on April 8th of the Flamingo for New York, was announced. Elizabeth, anxious to re-

join the four children she had left behind, resolved to embrace the opportunity and postpone the rest of her preparation until she should reach America. The captain of the vessel was inexperienced; moreover, war had broken out between England and France. Fears for the young widow's safety upon the high seas so troubled Antonio that he decided to accompany her himself. Once in America he could improve the occasion to attend to business concerns connected with his establishment in Leghorn, while at the same time he hoped to support his friend in the religious opposition likely to arise. Mrs. Seton was very grateful when Antonio made known his intention and little Anna was delighted. This child of predilection seems to have turned to our holy religion as a bird to its nest. She was always running off with the Filicchi children to visit neighboring shrines. Now she eagerly inquired of her mother if there were not Catholics and Catholic Churches in America, too.

The voyage was slow but without disaster though they were subjected on the way, as Mr. Filicchi had feared, to that arrest and search by English ships which eventually brought about the war of 1812. On June 4, 1804, they reached New York.

The shadow of death, which had so lately rested upon Elizabeth, fell almost immediately across her path in the New World. On the 8th of July there passed away Rebecca Seton, the sister-in-law who had been as a Mother to Elizabeth's children during the months of absence. She it was whom Mrs. Seton had been wont to call her "soul's sister." Together they had gone so frequently on visits of mercy to the poor of New York that they had become popularly known as "the Protestant Sisters of Charity." Rebecca's death was a great blow to Elizabeth. Doubtless she had hoped that when she should present herself at the baptismal font of the Catholic Church this dear friend might also receive the great gift of faith. But the shortness of time prevented. Very wisely she did not attempt in the hour of death, to disturb the religious convictions of one who had led so charitable and innocent a life and whose soul had been accustomed to daily intercourse with God.

Rebecca's death made Elizabeth's sad heart turn with greater longing than ever to the Catholic Church. Filippo Filicchi had given her a letter to Bishop Carroll and had advised her to seek that great prelate's counsel before taking any decisive step. But now Antonio thought that she should without delay acquaint

her relatives with her resolution. This last advice she followed and a storm of reproach was the result.

Angry words did not make Elizabeth waver and her relatives, who were deeply attached to her, tried another plan. In their eyes and in those of practically all the well-to-do New Yorkers of the time, to become a Catholic was to incur the worst possible disgrace. Naturally, then, they strove to protect the beautiful young widow from what they considered a calamity worse than death. They called to their aid a talented Episcopalian minister, Mr, Hobart, in whom the entire family had always trusted and to whom Elizabeth herself was warmly attached.

Then began a period of anguish for this chosen soul. On one side was Mr. Hobart with his charming personality and specious reasoning. To him she was bound by claims of gratitude for he had taken a great interest in her spiritual welfare. Reverence for authority, a strong trait in her character, also moved her to yield to his guidance, and love for her relatives, who were deeply afflicted at her so-called delusions, pressed hard. There was, moreover, anxiety for her children's welfare, for if she became a Catholic, the Setons would cut her off from all financial aid. On the

other side were the Filicchis,—Filippo frequently writing words of encouragement together with clear expositions of Catholic doctrines; and Antonio procuring, in his anxiety, the written help of the great Bishop Carroll and of Father O'Brien, pastor of St. Peter's Church in Barclay Street. Doubtless too, the prayers of the Filicchi children and of many others, on both sides of the water, were ascending day and night to the throne of our compassionate Lord.

The soul of poor Mrs. Seton herself was clouded. That clearness of faith which had dawned in Italy, became obscured. For a time she tried to resume the devotions of the Episcopal Church but found herself unable to trust in them. She tells us how, kneeling beside her relatives, she turned her head towards the Tabernacle of the Catholic Church and, from afar, adored her God, there alone truly present. In December she gave up all church going and retired to her house, with her children, where she spent most of her leisure in beseeching light from on high. Mr. Hobart seems at this time to have abondoned her, so that Elizabeth was left to herself. A great discouragement came down upon her. Her tears were so many that her little children often left their play and with artless wonder

strove to console "poor mamma." It must have been with a strange mingling of grief and consolation that she heard them coaxing her to say "Hail Mary." Annina had learned it in Italy and now even the Baby Catherine begged to be taught.

At last the cloud passed. On the feast of the Epiphany, 1805, an interior light flashed into her heart while she pondered on the words of Bourdaloue in his sermon for the day. With faith she applied to Father Cheverus of Boston, soon to be appointed Bishop, of whose learning and goodness she had heard from Antonio Filicchi. The paternal and convincing reply of the saintly priest, together with the words of Bishop Carroll, decided her choice and she prepared for Baptism with a conviction never again to be shaken.

On the fourteenth of March, in the presence of the rejoicing Antonio Filicchi, she was received into the true Church, and on Lady Day made her First Communion. Her touching attraction to the Blessed Sacrament was shown by the fidelity with which she attended early Mass during the days of preparation. To quote her own words, "Deep snow or smooth ice, all to me the same—I see nothing but the little bright cross on St. Peter's steeple."

Her words, describing the emotions of her

heart in that First Communion, are too beautiful to forget. "The first thought I remember was 'Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered,' for it seemed to me that my King had come to take His throne, and instead of the humble, tender welcome I had expected to give Him, it was but a triumph of joy and gladness that the deliverer was come, and my defence and shield, and strength and salvation, made mine for this world and the next."

Now that Mrs. Seton had found peace of heart, her next care was to find bread for herself and her children. Of her dead husband's means practically nothing was left. His family refused to assist her in any way; though had she remained an Episcopalian, they would have provided bountifully for her and her children during the rest of her life.

Her attempts at earning a livelihood in New York all met with failure, owing principally to local bigotry, and things would have gone ill with her had not the Filicchis come to the rescue. They authorized her to call for any amount upon their bankers in the metropolis, but a natural pride prevented her from drawing generously on their resources. She would take only what was absolutely necessary, despite their constant urging. Had the kind Italians had their way they would have

transported herself and all her children to their own warm land, far away from the unnatural coldness of her Protestant kinsmen but the disapproval of her priestly friends, who, perhaps, secretly felt that a good work awaited her on this side of the water, made her steadily refuse to consent.

The next scheme was that she should remove to Montreal, there to teach in some convent where she might still superintend the education of her little daughters. Her two sons might be brought up at some nearby college, at the Filicchis' expense. This idea grew on Mrs. Seton. She had become acquainted with convent life for the first time in Italy and it had much appealed to her. The vision of quiet days of prayer and teaching with the possibility of eventually donning the religious habit seemed only a sweet dream, too good to be true.

In 1807 Father Dubourg, president of the Sulpician College of St. Mary's in Baltimore, came on a visit to New York. In conversation with Mrs. Seton of whose conversion he had heard with great interest, the Montreal project was touched on, but he suggested, half in earnest, that she should go to Baltimore instead, and commence a much-needed school there. In the next year he came again and

urged the plan. Mrs. Seton, distrustful of her abilities, applied to her old friend, Bishop Carroll, for advice, who, before answering, asked the opinion of Father Cheverus and of Dr. Matignon, his able assistants in Boston.

These saintly men were united in enthusiastic approval. They looked into the future and saw the rosy vision of a great religious community, of which Elizabeth Seton would be foundress, stretching forth its powers to the conversion and education of thousands. She, about whose person such hopes were entertained, smiled in her humility, but, according to life-long custom, abandoned her course to the guidance of Divine Providence.

On June 9, 1808, she left New York with her three daughters for Catholic Baltimore and reached the city on the fifteenth of the month. Her sons who, through the kindness of the Filicchis, were then at Georgetown College, were soon after transferred to St. Mary's at Father Dubourg's suggestion, in order to be near their Mother. This zealous priest undertook, without fees, to educate them.

A small house near the Seminary was rented, where Elizabeth received her first boarders in September. Since the primary intention was to make the school a religious centre,

only Catholic children were admitted. Though few in number, Mrs. Seton found them, in addition to her own children, a heavy responsibility, until the arrival in December of her first helper, Cecilia O'Conway, of Philadelphia. This young lady desired to become a religious and had intended to sail for Europe to accomplish her design, when she met Father Babade, Mrs. Seton's confessor. His account of Elizabeth and his hopes of the early beginning of a community in Baltimore, had, to Mrs. Seton's great joy, induced Miss O'Conway to offer herself.

The new school had opened without financial difficulty, owing to the ever-ready generosity of the Filicchis, who attributed to Elizabeth's prayers their increasing prosperity and insisted on sharing the foundation of the work. In the fall of 1808, a new benefactor appeared in the person of Mr. Cooper, a recent convert to the Faith. To Father Dubourg, the action of God was manifest, when, on the same day, this gentleman and Mrs. Seton separately approached him to speak of a thought which had filled the mind of each during Mass that morning in St. Mary's chapel.

Mrs. Seton had felt a great longing to devote herself to the teaching of many of Christ's little ones and had wished, in her heart, that

Mr. Cooper, whom she knew to possess means, might be inspired to bestow his wealth for their education. At the same hour Mr. Cooper, filled with the desire to carry out literally the Saviour's words, "Go sell what thou hast and give to the poor," was thinking of the need of religious education for children and wondering if Mrs. Seton would accept his money for the work. After deliberation, the desires of both were realized. With a part of Mr. Cooper's gift, an estate was purchased in a valley of the Blue Ridge Mountains, a half-mile south of Emmittsburg. This delightful spot became the cradle of Mother Seton's Community, the first religious congregation founded in America.

Rumors of the enterprise began to spread, and one postulent after another presented herself. They remained in Baltimore while some provision was being made for them in Emmittsburg and in the meantime, June, 1809, adopted a religious habit. Mother Seton is said to have made this costume like one she had seen in Italy. Owing, probably, to the bigotry of the times, she did not adopt a veil but retained the widow's cap which she had been wearing for some years. This was made of white muslin, with a crimped border and a band of black. Not long after the

Sisters' arrival in the valley, however, a black cap was substituted.

Nine sisters, besides Mrs. Seton, were in Emmittsburg to make their first spiritual Retreat, which was given in August by Father Dubourg. They needed indeed to fortify their souls and render their enthusiasm firm for the difficulties of a severe winter were at hand.

Archbishop Carroll, though intensely interested in the establishment of the Community, did not undertake their immediate direction. He appointed Father Dubourg, at whose suggestion Mother Seton had first come to Baltimore, as ecclesiastical superior, reserving to himself the final judgment in important matters.

While awaiting a decision as to what rule they were to obey, the Sisters followed a program of spiritual exercises and of charitable labors suited to that apostolic but interior life which Mother Seton realized to be most needed in America. She herself was the guiding spirit of the house. After her husband's death she had looked only for a few quiet years and then the repose of eternity, but now she burned with zeal to work for souls. Poverty and privation were made sweet to those who came under her influence.

Her life-long habit of trust in God's Fatherly love bore her up amid the trials of a religious foundress, a position of which she ever deemed herself unworthy.

Before leaving Baltimore, Mother Seton had, for one year, made the three vows of religion in the hands of Archbishop Carroll and in the presence of a number of priests deeply interested in the new undertaking. This great prelate, who became the true father of the Community, resembled Mother Seton in having experienced crushing sorrow in early life, from which he rose to be a veritable apostle of Jesus Christ. He was ordained a Jesuit in 1769 but four years later suffered the greatest grief of his life, when his illustrious Order was suppressed. At that time he wrote to his brother, "I am not, and perhaps never shall be, recovered from the shock of this dreadful intelligence. The greatest blessing which in my estimation I could receive from God would be immediate death; but if He deny me this, may His Holy and adorable designs on me be wholly fulfilled." Those designs led him, as the first prelate in the United States, to unwearied labors, not the least of which was the establishment of Mother Seton's daughters.

At first, the Sisters gave St. Joseph's name

to their little society but in 1810 Bishop Flaget brought from France a copy of the rules of St. Vincent de Paul. These were translated by Father Dubourg, in whose pastoral care Emmittsburg was placed. It was then determined that the new Sisters should declare themselves St. Vincent's children although it was necessary to make some important modifications in his rule.

Unlike the Sisters of Charity in France, Mother Seton's followers were to be primarily educators. In the words of Archbishop Carroll, September 11, 1811. "They must consider the business of education as a laborious, charitable and permanent object of their religious duty." A year was passed in discussing and practising the various parts of this modified rule which was definitely confirmed by the Archbishop, January 17, 1812.

The event, which supplied an element of stability to her efforts, was a great joy to Mother Seton. She much needed this taste of consolation for soon she was to drink a very bitter cup. Annina, the darling flower of St. Joseph's valley, died on the twelfth of March. The loving spirit which had cheered her sick father in the Lazaretto years before, had developed according to Mother Seton's own heart. She had been as guardian angel to the

children of the school and had crowned her young life by making the religious vows little more than a month before her death. Her loss was a terrible blow to poor Mother Seton, who had yearned to see her child's exceptional fervor grow to mature sanctity.

It was not the first time that death had visited the little band; the remains of Harriet and Cecelia Seton, two youthful aunts of Annina, were already lying in their little burying-ground, which Father Bruté called the "delightful little wood-happy little corner of the world." Upon their graves Mother Seton had looked with mingled feelings. She shed tears at the thought of the sacrifices they had made in following her into the Catholic Church, but joy was mixed with her weeping when she reflected upon their remarkably holy deaths and consoled herself by thinking that God, in calling them away so early, had insured a perseverance which must have been severely tried, had they lived longer.

In the desolation of spirit which Annina's death brought to Mother Seton, she was able to turn for help to a remarkably kind and enlightened director, Father Simon Gabriel Bruté, who, in September, 1812, was appointed Superior. Many of the letters and little

exhortations which he wrote to Mother Seton and the Sisters have been preserved, and in reading his quaint sentences, elliptical and sometimes obscure, we gain a slight knowledge of one of the best-loved priests in America. Mother Seton appreciated his worth and recognized him a spirit like to her own. Under his guidance she advanced steadily in self-denial and in love for God.

In the same year little Rebecca was injured by a fall on the ice and continued to be a sufferer until her agonizing but wonderfuly pious death in November, 1816. We learn something of what the ministrations of Father Bruté must have been, in reading even part of one of his notes to this poor child. The nature of her injury prevented her from lying down and the priest tenderly writes:—"Bec no bed last night.—Then a standing or sitting watch, as the knights of old, on the eve they were knighted. Ah, well might we take this whole life, my Bec, for the meritorious watch of our eternal knighthood! The soul still knows how to cheer up, seeing, and feeling her God, her Father and Almighty Lover in all. Ah, yes! if I know your faith and your love, my Bec, they will be as unrelenting and pressing, as the sufferings can be, and more. One look to your bleeding Jesus will restore

more strength and resolution, than a wearisome night would have taken away. He loved me, and for me was patient upon the cross, so I love Him, and will be patient, too. Blessed by the short patience of this dolorous life: life is short, and the sweet fruit of the patience, eternal."

On the fourth of November, Father Bruté, away at the time from Emmittsburg, received word from Father Dubois of the flight" as he calls it of their "angel." He writes, "The Mother is a miracle of divine favor. Night and day by the bedside of her child, her health has not appeared to suffer. She held her child in her arms without shedding one tear, all the time of her agony, and even more than eight minutes after her death. 'Mulierem fortem quis, etc.'

Thus did Mother Seton's strength of soul triumph in faith and love over the agony of her human heart. Yet life was not made up entirely of griefs. The Community in St. Joseph's Valley was slowly but steadily increasing, and the beauties of character which developed in the young souls whom she watched maturing into noble Sisters of Charity were a constant source of consolation. True, there were difficulties; finances were often low; but the extreme hardships of the early days had passed and the future looked bright.

Already this little mustard tree was shooting forth branches from the parent trunk. The Sisters had been asked for in Philadelphia and in October, 1814, had taken charge of a house for orphans there. Beginning under great financial stress, for the orphanage had a debt of four thousand dollars, they met with most encouraging success. In three years the house was free from debt and the Sisters felt that their efforts had been visibly blessed by God.

In the year after Rebecca's death, 1817, Mother Seton sent a small band to undertake the care of an orphanage in New York city. Day-schools for children followed and the Sisters' teaching vocation became more pronounced.

Bishop Dubourg, at whose urging, ten years before, Mother Seton had come to Baltimore, paid the Valley a visit in 1818. He noted with joyful amazement that the Community numbered between thirty and forty members and that the Academy had about eighty pupils.

Among the children of the school Mother Seton's influence was profound. She loved to visit their classes and took a maternal interest in the progress of each child. Like her patron, St. Vincent de Paul, she was a thorough believer in humility and kindness.

Consequently, the sweet blending of condescension and encouragement with which she treated all, won for her the unlimited confidence of the young people and the gratitude of their parents. In her were verified the words of gentle Father Bruté, who, treating of what he called "the true, pious policy of divine charity" quaintly wrote, in 1819. "I trust that Mother can do it so properly, through her union to your common Beloved, and her heart of a true, Christian mother."

In addition to the time taken up in the schools and the hours devoted to the government of the growing Community, Mother Seton found leisure for writing. How delighted would her children be now, if she had set down in finished form her own beautiful thoughts on spiritual subjects! Her mind deeply penetrated with the spirit and the language of Holy Scripture, could surely have given us pages of rare value; but instead, she turned to spiritual writings in the French language and translated them into English. She used her musical talent, too, to foster the Sisters' devotion. We know that she set the words of "Jerusalem, My Happy Home" to music, and suppose that she must have done likewise with other favorite hymns.

The young girls educated in St. Joseph's

Valley were surely fortunate. Their school was situated in an ideal country within view of the mountain slopes of the Blue Ridge, and in a vale which became, in summer, a very fairyland of flowers. Living beneath the same roof with their Eucharistic King, they acquired a knowledge of things divine.

Whatever their attachment to their teachers, they reverenced Mother Seton above all. It is recorded of her that she consoled a Sister who apologized for disturbing her frequently, by declaring the interruption to be as welcome as sunshine at her door; hence we can easily imagine the radiant smile and the tender look with which she greeted all who approached her.

Every twenty-fifth of March, she devoutly celebrated the anniversary of her First Communion. The little ones in Baltimore had been the first under her charge, whom she had the joy of sending likewise to the Divine Banquet. That First Communion class had awakened within her an overflowing piety and tenderness. As, in simple, white dresses, they had approached the Holy Table their presence seemed to her "as angels." Not, however, to herself but to the religious instructions of good Father Babade, did she attribute the sweet preparedness of the young

communicants. Nevertheless, our hearts tell us that the Divine love which they saw burning in her dark eyes, and felt vibrating in her sweet voice, had made a still deeper impression than his priestly words.

Though Mother Seton's biographers do not speak further of her interest in the wee guests of our Divine Host, we may be sure that each year, as soon as the sweet breath of early spring touched St. Joseph's Valley, the dear Mother took an active part in the First Communion instructions. She loved to teach the poor children of the neighborhood and early in the history of Emmittsburg, classes for their tuition were opened in addition to the regular academic course of what is to-day St. Joseph's College.

We have seen how, despite Mother Seton's own shrinking from a position of authority, Divine Providence had placed her at the head of the young Community. The Sisters, as they grew more numerous, became more firmly convinced that no one of their number was more fit to govern than she. In 1815 they had re-elected her and now, for the third time, in 1818 the government of the Institute was given into her hands. She was not to be released from the trials of governing until God should call her Home.

This third election she herself termed "an election of the dead." Her health was failing more than her children realized. But God evidently gave her a premonition that her life was drawing to its close, and her spirit of loving self-consecration to Him intensified with each passing day. Father Bruté who had before helped her soul so much, was again appointed confessor in 1818. This "angel guardian of the mountain," was to support her last steps to the summit of everlasting peace.

In May, 1820, Mother Seton wrote to her son William, then absent on an extensive cruise: "You know that the long, long day to come is all I care for." But in the same letter, too, we find a touchingly human line about "the creaking of the willow at the back porch—it sounds so like the sound of masts in a gale." Perhaps she felt that she was never to see him again.

Summer came and went without giving her more strength and in the autumn she fell seriously ill. All the loving care of the Sisters was of no avail. For four months Mother Seton was confined to her room, preparing for the great Call. During her last illness, she one day expressed herself in words which make us wonder to what extent God was

graciously pleased to console His faithful child, who for His sake had suffered no many trials. She said, "I never felt more sensibly the presence of our Dearest than since I have been sick; it seems as if Our Lord or His Blessed Mother stood continually by me, in a corporal form, to comfort, cheer and encourage me in the difficult weary and tedious hours of pain. But you will laugh at my imaginations; still, our All has many ways of comforting His little atoms."

At death Mother Seton displayed a wonderful strength of soul. Her ardent love and longing for the Holy Eucharist moved even her Sisters to amazement. She was able to receive Communion frequently during her last days and each reception was to the beholders an unspoken sermon.

The end came early in the morning of January 4, 1821. She asked one of the Sisters near to recite St. Ignatius' prayer, "Anima Christi," but the voice of the grief-stricken religious became choked. Then the dying Mother calmly took up the invocations and finished them herself. Her last words were loving appeals to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, with whom she had in spirit lived so faithfully on earth.

Dear Mother Seton was dead. Time passed

on. Gradually her heart-broken children learned to walk in her footsteps, without the encouragement of her inspiring glance and cheering smile. It was God after all Who had planted, and now that He had taken back into His hands His first helper in the seed-time, the harvest would still mature.

To-day, after more than a hundred years, we are the witness of that growth. Students of ecclesiastical history, in America, are all familiar with the story of the affiliation of the Emmittsburg Sisters with St. Vincent de Paul's daughters in France. This took place in 1849, twenty-eight years after the Foundress' death. It has been stated by some that the event was in accordance with Mother Seton's early plans. When it took place, however, there were many of her early associates living, who maintained that Mother Seton had never entertained the idea of union with the French sisterhood, and was even opposed to it. One of these was Sister Elizabeth Boyle who became the first Mother of the New York Community.

Whatever the plans of Mother Seton were, Divine Providence has, by means of the association she established, brought into America the noble congregation of St. Vincent's daughters, and has also preserved the Mother

Seton Sisters, with the spirit and traditions of their early days.

In 1846, an order was issued from Maryland for the withdrawal of all the New York Sisters then in charge of male children. The Superiors in Emmittsburg were paving the way for the contemplated change to St. Vincent's original rule, which allows the care of girls only. Naturally Bishop Hughes, ever interested and active in the charitable works of his diocese, looked with consternation at the approaching abandonment of his numerous orphan boys. He felt that without the Sisters, he could not obtain adequate care for these helpless little ones, and to give up the orphanage seemed in his eyes a great injustice to the people of New York, who had contributed much money for its maintenance.

An interesting correspondence ensued between the Bishop and the Emmittsburg Superiors with the result that the forty-five Sisters then engaged on the New York Missions were given their choice, either to return to Emmittsburg, or to remain in New York for the purpose of forming a separate Community under the protection of Bishop Hughes. Thirty-five decided to remain.

That great good was wrought by their decision has been proved by the flourishing

works of our dear Sisters in the Empire state, whose beautiful Mother-House of Mount Saint Vincent-on-the-Hudson has sent forth hundreds of teachers and nurses to spread the Kingdom of Christ.

THE SEAL OF CHARITY

Long, long ago, three Eastern Kings
Beheld a shining star;
They followed where its radiance led
To Bethlehem afar.
In foreign land in darkest night,
There shines a star for me—
My star of hope, of light, of love,
My Seal of Charity.

Where great Saint Vincent points the way
The ranks of virgins tread,
To join the lovers of the Lamb,
Their one true Spouse to wed.
Though dark the road, within their seal
Three shining guides I see,
Of Poverty, Obedience,
And Heavenly Chastity.

O Paradise, at home with God!
Where praise of Christ, our King,
And Mary, glorious Queen of Heaven,
The Saints and Angels sing!
The bitter woes of earth forgot,
'Tis there I long to see
Emblazoned in my crown for e'er
The Seal of Charity.

MOTHER SETON'S DAUGHTERS IN HALIFAX.

NOT the least among the zealous efforts of the new Community was the establishment of a Mission in far off Halifax, where, in 1849, just three years after the separation, four Sisters, at the earnest solicitation of Archbishop Walsh, were sent to open a school and to take charge of the orphans. The hearts of the little children there were truly as virgin soil, for no religious of any congregation had as yet stood among them in church or school.

A few words about the growth and after development of this Mission, the sole offshoot of Mother Seton's Institute in Canadian parts, may prove of interest to the reader. The Sisters were established near St. Mary's Cathedral in the quaint Convent which stands to-day, an old-fashioned land-mark, recalling to those acquainted with the history of the pioneer days of the Church in Halifax, many a signal victory of truth over error during that trying period of bigotry and intolerance.

The Mission at St. Mary's was but six years old when it became evident that an independent Mother House was needed. There were many

promising young ladies in the city who were eager to join the Community, but their parents shrank from permitting them to go to New York for their Novitiate. In those days of difficult travel, New York seemed a long distance away. Added to this were other difficulties, which, in some cases, could not easily be surmounted; hence vocations languished; while the constant growth of the works undertaken called imperatively for much more help than could be supplied by the parent Community.

In this emergency, Archbishop Walsh, aided by the advice of Archbishop Hughes, and supported by the gracious concurrence of the New York Superiors, applied to the Holy See for permission to establish a separate Mother House in his Metropolitan See; supplicating, at the same time, that it might enjoy the same spiritual privileges as those already accorded to the Emmittsburg and New York Communities. With the grant of the petition came the paternal blessing of His Holiness, Pius IX, on the enterprise; and it was, therefore, with a feeling of grateful joy that all concerned witnessed the inauguration of the New Mother House. This event, of so great importance to religion, took place on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1855.

One of the great blessings enjoyed by the Halifax Foundation, and one for which the Community has ever been deeply grateful to Divine Providence, is the fact that it had at its head during its missionary days, and for the first three years after it became a Mother House, a Superior who had received her early education and religious training at the hands of Mother Seton herself, whose spirit she had imbibed, and who ever strove to model her subjects after the example of the holy Foundress. Thus, from their very beginning the works of the Sisters of Charity in Halifax were animated by the same spirit which had characterized the humble beginnings at Emmittsburg only a few decades before. It is not surprising therefore to find that those works, through the continuance of the same fostering care, have produced the abundant fruit which we behold around us to-day.

With the establishment of the Mother House in Halifax, a new impetus was given to the works previously begun by the little colony from New York. On the very day of its birth, two exemplary young ladies of the city offered themselves to the new Community, and their example was immediately followed by others whose natural gifts, fervent piety, and apostolic spirit fitted them in a remarkable

manner for the pioneer work of the Institute.

Through the influx of members, the young Community was soon in a position to extend its works, not only in the city, but in more remote parts, and even beyond the boundaries of the Province. The first stages of its existence were indeed marked with severe hardships and unusual difficulties. More than once the multiplied obstacles standing in the way of its progress seemed insurmountable; but, by the aid of Divine Providence, one by one they disappeared and the way was made clear. As the years passed and the works of the Sisters became more widely known, applications for their services became still more numerous—some calling for educational enterprises; others for the government of hospitals and the management of charitable institutions; but then, as now, the demands were always in excess of the possibilities to supply a sufficient number of members for the works proposed. Thus many an invitation could not be accepted. Some of these calls to Apostolic work came from the Northwest of Canada and distant Australia.

In 1887, by a happy arrangement of Divine Providence, the Institute found itself in a position to accept an invitation to take charge of a parochial school in Roxbury, Massa-

chusetts. This to many seemed a call from Mother Seton herself, to her Canadian daughters, to share in the extension of Catholic education in her own land. All who are acquainted with the early history of Mother Seton's Institute will remember that Boston had been the scene of the activities of her daughters years before the link binding the Emmittsburg and New York Communities under one government was severed. It was, then, the happy privilege of the Halifax branch to resume and to promote in the field of education the work which had been dearest to the heart of the holy Foundress.

The success of this Mission was a recommendation for the noble efforts of the Sisters, which soon bore fruit in the establishment of other educational enterprises, notably, an Academy for young boys, and a College for young ladies, both situated at Wellesley Hills, about thirteen miles from Boston. At the time of writing, the Sisters are in charge of five large Grammar Schools, and five High Schools in the State of Massachusetts, while many other good works not directly attached to these schools receive the benefit of their zealous supervision.

One of the great achievements of the Institute, and undoubtedly the most telling

in the advance of Catholic education, is the rank it has acquired in the department of Public Education in the Province of Nova Scotia. In this sphere, the efforts of the Sisters have elicited the highest praise and just appreciation, not only of those directly concerned, but also of those whose duty it is to pass unbiased judgment on their work. In the city of Halifax, they conduct three large public schools for girls, two for boys and girls, and a High School, where the Catholic young girls of the city may pursue a higher course of study and may have all the advantages necessary to that end.

It may here be stated that by an Act of the Legislature, the Institute enjoys the singular privilege of a separate Normal School for the training of its members for positions in the public schools of the Province.

At the present time the Institute can count, with satisfaction, forty houses, seven of which are in the United States, one in Bermuda, two in New Brunswick, and four in the far West. The scope of its works embraces grammar school and higher education, the care of orphans, the sick, aged, and infirm ladies, and the protection of working girls. It has eight Academies, fourteen public schools, and fourteen parochial schools. To twenty-

two of these schools are attached high school departments. In the line of Institutions, it has two general hospitals, a Sanatorium for the treatment of Tuberculosis, a home for working girls, one for aged ladies, an orphanage for boys, one for girls, and a foundling asylum. We need not look far back into the years to see these works in their nascent state. Watered by the benedictions of heaven, they have grown from the little grain of mustard seed into a great tree whose branches have extended far beyond the date when the corner stone was laid, on that memorable Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1855. Although the Institute embraces nearly all forms of charitable works, the greater part of its energies from the first have been, and still are, directed towards the field of education.

From the dawn of its existence, the Institute has enjoyed successively the special benediction of the Sovereign Pontiffs. It was under the paternal blessing of Pius IX that it started into life, and later, Leo XIII, embracing its interests and removing from its path the difficulties obstructing its progress, pronounced a eulogy in its favor, which may be looked upon as the preface to the formal and final approbation of its Constitutions by his successor, Pius X. Later still, the hand

of Benedict XV. and that of the present Pontiff, Pius XI. have been raised in paternal blessing over the Institute.

It has seemed fitting to end this brief sketch of Mother Seton's life and works with some notes which have particular reference to the Halifax Branch of her Order, the Golden Jubilee of whose Mother House and first Academy — Mount St. Vincent-on-Bedford Basin was celebrated this year, 1924.

Mount Saint Vincent fifty years ago was a small building erected with no other thought than that of providing for the Institute a more suitable Mother House and Novitiate and of affording a summer resort for the Sisters teaching in the city; but in the projection of this enterprise, there had been in the Divine plan, a work unthought of, and which appeared only after the building had been completed and occupied. Many residents of the city and other neighboring places having observed how suitable was the locality for a school, at once petitioned for the admission of pupils. The consequence was that within a short time over twenty young ladies were received. So satisfactory did the results of the first year prove that the year following showed, within very limited accommodation, between sixty-five and seventy boarders; while

already applications from distant places were being made. Thus did the Academy of Mount Saint Vincent-on-Bedford Basin come into existence—without any forethought or planning on the part of the Institute. For this reason it has always seemed, to those acquainted with the original plan, more like an emanation from the Divine Mind than the product of human thought.

The steady increase in the number of pupils soon called for an additional building, and from time to time, other additions were made, supplying more ample accommodation, and affording fresh facilities for the progress and development of the Academy. Mount St. Vincent stands to-day a finished Institution, a fact recognized in the Dominion. Success has marked its every step. The enrollments show that pupils have come from far distant places to finish their education—Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Newfoundland, St. Pierre et Miquelon, Magdalen Islands, Bermuda, Porto Rico, Cuba, Trinidad, Boston, New York, Chicago, Cities of Southern States, and England have been well represented year after year.

Looking back through the years and calling to mind the vast number of students who have gone forth equipped for the sterner battles of

life, we have abundant proof that the little seed cast into the furrow fell on good ground. Tended with unremitting care, strengthened and adorned with the blessing of Heaven, it has produced rich fruit for the glory of the Church in the field of Catholic education. The "Te Deum" of the Golden Jubilee rang out loud and strong in ardent praise to God, and in supplication that His guiding Hand continue to direct the work and bless for all time the labors of Mother Seton's Sisters in Halifax.

ALL GLORY
TO HIS HOLY NAME!

THE BRIDAL SONG OF A SISTER OF CHARITY.

Oh, day of bliss! oh, day of rapt content!
Oh, day of daring hope's accomplishment!
Now, Jesus, is my holocaust complete,
I am Thy Spouse, O tenderest Lover sweet!

Gentle Thy wooing, soft Thy call to me,
Thou Who hast loved me from eternity,
Robing my sinful soul in purest white
That in its lilied depths Thou mightest delight.

Veiling Thy glory lest it blind these mortal eyes,
O Wondrous Love, my Prince, in meek disguise
Thou comest a Eucharistic bride to claim,
And to a beggar-maid Thou givest Thy Name.

My thorny wreath more precious is by far
Than all earth's crowns of gold or flowers are;
And sweet the promise of my nuptial vows
That I shall daily grow like Thee, my Spouse.

My crucifix, pledge of our troth, I take
That lures me on to suffer for Thy sake.
Thou art my Strength, my Peace, my Final Goal—
Oh, keep me true to Thee, Soul of my soul!

O brides of earth, do you not envy me
Who never parted from my Love shall be?
Whom death shall only place in His embrace,
Lifting the veil that hides awhile His face?

COUNSELS OF OUR BELOVED MOTHER SETON

LAUDATUM JESUS CHRISTUS!

BE united as true Sisters of Charity. Stand most faithfully by your Rules. Be children of the Church.

I entreat you, in the name of our Adored, to take courage, and look to the crown before you.

Try every day to get nearer the dearest and best of Masters.

Everything except Eternity seems a dream. My soul thirsts for pain and knows no pleasure except in suffering.

I hope your cross may increase until it purifies you like pure Gold.

Patience is the virtue of the perfect.

At last, God is mine, and I am His.

Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Eternity.

The grace of the Cross is to draw the soul to God.

Courage, hope and Heaven. He goes before who will crown our hope, but our sufferings must be consummated too.

The sufferings are for a moment, the crown of patience eternal.

A look to no one but God alone; meanwhile, peace and goodwill to all!

May we praise and bless and adore forever!

"The Master is come and calleth for thee"—St. John, XI, 28.

Listen! Do you not hear His knocking? He has been waiting patiently a long time for you to answer Him. Permit Him to enter your heart and deliver His message. Will you turn Him away sad and disappointed as so many do, even as the rich young man did, the clamor of whose wealth drowned the gentle appeal of the Master?

What is the message He brings to you? He says, "My child give me your heart. It is I who made it and endowed it with the capacity of loving, only that I might pour out my infinite love upon it and that it might give itself in turn to Me. Would you have me your God, all your own? Then give me your entire self. I give Myself to souls in proportion to the generosity with which they give themselves to Me. If they withhold nothing, neither do I, but hasten to bestow upon them My

infinite beauty, My limitless perfections, My burning, living, Divine Heart.

"Greater love than this, no man hath that a man lay down his life for his friend."—St. John, XV, 13.

Thus have I loved you. Come, lay down your life at my feet. How? By religious profession, by the life of the evangelical counsels, you may make an offering of your life to Me, which Holy Church will accept in My name and as My representative. Then I myself will lead you to perfection as I have promised. "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor and come follow Me."

"The Religious lives more purely, falls more rarely, rises more promptly, walks more prudently, is refreshed with graces more frequently, rests more securely, dies more peacefully, is purified more quickly, and is rewarded more abundantly."

"I have chosen you."—St. John, XV, 16.

Do not mistake the Master's voice. He is so true a friend, surely you know when He speaks. To some He whispers softly in the hushed moments after Communion, or in the silence of retreat. In others He creates a

restlessness and a sense of the emptiness of the joys the world labels "Happiness" and having made a great hollow in their heart, He promises to fill the aching void with His peace, saying "Come to me" all you that labor and are heavy burdened and I will refresh you." (St. Matthew, XI: 38).

Sometimes His call is clear and ringing when He finds a generous soul filled with a burning zeal for His service. He needs but say one word—"Come." Some He approaches through their reason, which tells them that the salvation of their immortal soul alone is worth their care and attention. Safety lies in keeping close to Jesus and the soul says: "In the shadow of Thy wings will I hope until iniquity shall pass away."—(Ps. 56, 8).

"Taste and see that the Lord is Sweet."
Psalm, 33, 9.

There is no joy like that of giving. Truly it is more blessed to give than to receive. Now to our Divine Lord we owe all that we possess, and although He could demand our entire service, He permits us rather to share the blessedness of giving and lovingly accepts as a gift what is rightly His own. Oh, the joy that follows! Only the Religious

who has tasted the sweetness of the Lord knows what happiness is. The better the religious, the greater her happiness. Carnal joys are not hers, but a deep calm and peace that makes her abound with joy even in the midst of tribulation. Verily is the promise of the Saviour fulfilled; "There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren for the Kingdom of God's sake who shall not receive much more in their present time, and in the world to come, life everlasting." (St. Luke XVIII: 29, 30).

"If the dear Master selects one among you to be closer to Him, happy are you! He will teach you Himself."

(MOTHER SETON).

"True liberty does not consist in the satisfying of our whims and fancies, but in our enfranchisement from the slavery of the passions. This is the inappreciable advantage which the vows procure."—St. Augustine.

When the Master finds a soul eager to follow Him in the way of perfection He leads her to the Religious life and shows her the path to sanctity laid down by the practice of the Vows.

By the Vows, the Religious sacrifices to God all that she has and all that she is. By the Vow

of Poverty, she sacrifices the exterior gifts of fortune; by the Vow of Chastity, the personal gifts of the body; by the Vow of Obedience, the intimate gifts of the soul.

Actions already good and praiseworthy when performed under the Vows secure a second or double merit. Moreover, every tiny act indifferent, and worthless in itself, becomes through the Vow meritorious. "I say to you, lay up to yourself treasures in Heaven where neither the rust nor the moth consumes and where thieves do not break through and steal."

Prayer in choosing a state of life.

O My God, Thou who art the God of wisdom and of counsel; Thou who readest in my heart the sincere will to please Thee alone, and to govern myself with regard to my choice of a state of life, entirely in conformity with Thy most holy desire; grant me by the intercession of the most Blessed Virgin, my Mother and of my holy patrons, especially of St. Joseph and St. Aloysius, the grace to know what state I ought to choose, and when known to embrace it, so that in it I may be able to pursue and increase Thy glory, work out my salvation and merit that heavenly reward which Thou hast promised to those who do Thy holy will.

Amen.

"He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.
(St. Matthew, X: 37).

So often the love of parents is the one obstacle that keeps a soul from God. Yet it should be no obstacle at all, for you cannot do more for your beloved ones than by entering religion. God loves them more dearly than you do and your sacrifice will profit them more than if you should spend your whole life toiling to make them happy. It is the opinion of the fathers of the Church that no member of the family of a fervent religious is ever lost.

"The charity of Christ presseth us."—
II Cor. V: 14.

The Sisters of Charity with their Mother House at Mount Saint Vincent, Halifax, are engaged in the education of youth, that field of the Master where the harvest is so great and the laborers so few—and in the care of the sick, the orphans, the infirm, and the poor; for the Master has said, "Inasmuch as you did it to the least of these little ones, you did it to Me." (St. Matthew, XXV: 40).

"God gives to each company which He forms a particular spirit. The spirit of the Sister of Charity is to love God and to serve Him in

humility and simplicity.—it is charity itself." (St. Vincent de Paul).

"And Philip findeth Nathaniel and said to him, "We have found Him of Whom the Prophets did write....Come and see." (St. John I: 45, 46).

Go, little messenger, tell all you meet we have found the Master, to serve Whom is light and peace and strength and love and bid whosoever desires to "Come, follow after."

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